

## CHOICES FACING CONGRESS AND AMERICAN PEOPLE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, the gentleman from Maine (Mr. ALLEN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to be joined by my friend, the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. LARSON). We are here tonight to talk about some of the choices that face us in Congress and face the American people as well. I know this is a time when all of us are preoccupied with the conflict in Afghanistan and the war against terrorism here in the United States. There is so much to do both on the foreign front and on the domestic front that perhaps we have not spent all the attention we need to on certain aspects of both the economic stimulus and the effort to protect Americans here at home. That is really what I want to talk about tonight.

I want to begin by referring to the economic stimulus package that passed this House 2 weeks ago by a vote of 218 to 214, only a four-vote margin. If any two people in the majority had switched their votes, that bill would not have passed. So it obviously was one of the more controversial items that we have had in the last few weeks in front of this House.

Now, from my point of view, what that so-called economic stimulus bill looked like was the same old tax cuts to the same old people that we have seen here before. Not quite the same old people because in this case it was the same old corporations. My friends on the Republican side of the aisle had concluded that the only way to stimulate this economy was to give hundreds of millions of dollars in some cases and more than a billion dollars in other cases to some of the wealthiest corporations in this country.

In order to understand an important part of this bill that we passed 2 weeks ago, you have to understand something called the alternative minimum tax. The alternative minimum tax is assessed both against individuals and against corporations. It is assessed only against wealthier individuals and wealthier corporations in both cases because they have so many tax credits, so many deductions, so many loopholes that if they did not pay the alternative minimum tax, they would not be paying much of a tax at all.

In the economic stimulus package, so-called, that the Republicans passed 2 weeks ago, there was a repeal of the alternative minimum tax for corporations.

□ 2200

This will cost the American taxpayers \$25 billion. This was not just a repeal of the Alternative Minimum Tax looking forward, it was a repeal and a

rebate of the Alternative Minimum Tax paid by companies like IBM, Ford, General Motors, General Electric and several hundred or even several thousand other corporations.

Tonight I want to talk about how much of a rebate those corporations will get that are in the top 16 of the beneficiaries of the largesse of my friends on the Republican side of the aisle. Let us turn to this particular chart.

In the economic stimulus package, H.R. 3090, IBM would receive a rebate of over \$1.4 billion. That is right, \$1.4 billion in a check going from the Federal Government to IBM, all in the name of stimulating the economy. Now, a majority, though not all of American taxpayers, recently got a rebate of \$300. But IBM gets a rebate of \$1.4 billion to cover the minimum tax that it had been paying since 1986.

Number two on the list is the Ford Motor Company. Ford gets \$1 billion, \$1 billion in a rebate, a check from the Federal Government. All of this is in the package, in the name of economic stimulus.

Now, you might ask, well, does either IBM or Ford have to invest this money in anything? Are there any strings to this money, any conditions, anything that would assure that this money is going to be invested by IBM, Ford, General Motors, General Electric or any other companies that are the beneficiaries of this largesse? The answer is no. No strings, no conditions. Straight to the bottom line. Probably the stock would go up the next day if this happened, if this bill were passed by the Senate. But that is what you have got.

Let me just read through a few of the larger beneficiaries of the House Republican economic stimulus bill. As I said, IBM gets \$1.4 billion; Ford Motor Company gets \$1 billion; General Motors gets \$833 million; General Electric gets \$671 million; the Texas Utility Company, TXU, gets \$608 million; DaimlerChrysler, \$600 million; and on down the list.

Now, before I call on my colleagues, who I am sure are as astonished as I am by simply writing checks to profitable, huge American corporations in the name of economic stimulus, I want to refer to one of the alternatives just a moment.

The Homeland Security Task Force of the Democratic Caucus has put together a bill to deal with the threat of bioterrorism in the United States. We have looked at a wide range of different risks to this country, and we have come up with a series of proposals to deal with those risks. Now, this bill, as I said, deals with the range of threats, threats presented by anthrax, smallpox, other threats to our food safety, emergency planning, coordination, all of those kinds of things.

I recently held a meeting in my district with police and fire officials and

EMT technicians, all of whom are under great stress since September 11. They have had extensive overtime, extensive extra expenses as a result of September 11. What they wanted was not just more funding, they wanted more training and they wanted better communication with Federal and State officials.

Let us just take a look for a moment at the priorities of our caucus, the Democratic Caucus, as compared to those tax cuts for the larger corporations in this country.

What we have decided as a caucus is we ought to spend about \$1.4 billion acquiring and researching vaccines and antibiotics. This presents a choice. We are threatened by anthrax, we know. There is always a risk of smallpox or other diseases out there that could be the subject of a terrorist attack. We think we need to deal with this threat and we need to deal with it now. \$1.4 billion will do it. That happens to be the same number that the House Republicans would write a check to IBM for, the same number.

One more example. We need to improve the ability of our local responders to deal with these kinds of medical emergencies. We can do that across this entire country for \$1 billion. \$1 billion, the same amount that our friends on the Republican side of the aisle believe should go to Ford Motor Company in a check; no strings, no conditions whatsoever.

We can go on down this list for some period of time and draw some of these contrasts, and we will do that in the course of this hour. But I would like to yield to my friend the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. LARSON), who has been deeply concerned about the implications of these priorities. I know that he, like all of us, is puzzled that, given the choices that are presented to this Congress, the majority would make a decision that seems so out of sync with the needs of this country.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. I thank the gentleman from Maine for yielding, and commend him for bringing to the attention of the body the importance of this issue.

The hard truth with most special orders, for those of you that are viewing at home, is that it is very difficult for us to get our message across when we are in the minority, so oftentimes we have to rely on voices beyond this Chamber. It is our sincere hope that we reach you, that we reach members of the media, so they can continue to take this case before the American public.

The American public in turn responds, because, after all, this is a time of war. We are currently a Nation at war, and though the war appears to be going well at this time and the President has the full support of Congress and the Nation and it is important for us to stay united as a country, we find

that some of the things that divide us are the very issues that the gentleman from Maine (Mr. ALLEN) is addressing this evening.

Let me say from the outset that I have always felt, and I believe most Americans believe this way as well, that in a time of crisis, in a time of war, it is a time for shared sacrifice; that the entire Nation has to pull together. Witness the valiant efforts of the rescuers at the World Trade Center, Mr. Beamer and those citizens aboard Flight 93, and, of course, the heroes at the Pentagon as well.

How can anyone go home this past weekend and talk to veterans and be able to look them in the eye and say, I am sorry, we will not be able to afford prescription drug relief for you because we have got to provide a tax cut for the wealthy?

I am sorry that perhaps there will not be enough vaccine to go around, because we have got to provide a tax cut for the wealthiest corporations?

I am sorry that there will not be airport security, because it will be too costly to afford in lieu of the tax cuts that we are providing?

I am sorry that we will continue to have to send our senior citizens to Canada to get prescription drugs that they can afford, because we have got to provide a tax cut for the wealthy?

It is obscene. It hurts when you have to go home and look at people who, in so many respects in the great irony of all this, we are talking to a generation that has lived through a second day of infamy, the first being December 7, 1941, the second being September 11. And of all the people we are asking to sacrifice, we are asking them to sacrifice.

Where does this money come from? It comes from the Social Security surplus. Instead of the money going into the Social Security surplus to deal with future generations retiring, it is going, instead, in windfall proportions to corporations and the very wealthy.

It is time for us to recognize what the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. FRANK) and others have recognized, that we need to freeze the existing tax cut that we have made, and then look at this giveaway of the repeal of the Alternative Minimum Tax and focus on the direct needs that the gentleman is pointing out here for homeland security.

How can we turn our backs on these frontline defenses for this Nation? It was not lost on any Member of Congress that it was not the FBI, it was not CIA, it was not the military or FAA or FEMA that responded first; it was local firefighters, police, emergency medical teams, allied health professionals and hospitals. They are crying out for this money, as are governors and members of General Assemblies across this Nation, because they are fearful that with a tax cut going to

the select few, there will be little money left for them to send out to our municipalities. There is \$8.7 billion utilized in terrorism today, with only \$300 million going out to our municipalities, meaning that \$8.4 billion stays within the Beltway.

These municipalities fear a top-down solution foisted upon them by the Federal Government; another mandate that will go unfunded, while we fund a tax cut for the wealthiest corporations, and, frankly, at a time when most of them are not even asking for it.

This is a time of shared sacrifice. The patriotic thing to do at this time is to make sure that the Nation is safe and secure; that there are vaccines available for everyone; that our frontline defenders are appropriately equipped and trained; and that our seniors, who have sacrificed much already, are able to get the prescription drugs that they need, and not have to face the God-awful choice between heating their homes, putting nutritious meals on their table and taking the drugs their doctors have told them they must take to survive.

That is why we are so concerned, and that is why, frankly, I am so angered by what is going on, because there is a great opportunity in this Nation to come together. The President has done a remarkable job in unifying this Nation and bringing about the war effort and getting everyone to focus, as we should, at rooting out terrorism. But if we root out terrorism and in the process do nothing to help the people in our own Nation, where are we?

We have stood on the shoulders of another generation for too long. It is time for us to reach back and uplift our own generation of elders in this country who are going without, and should not be made to sacrifice yet again while we provide huge and massive tax cuts to the wealthy few.

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for those comments. What he says about shared sacrifice is exactly the point. It is not what some of these large American corporations seem to be in the mood to do though.

I thought I would go back to this chart for a moment. The House Republicans passed this economic stimulus package, and, as you can see, we have listed on this one chart the 16 corporations that get the largest checks from the Federal Government if this bill becomes law. It ranges from the \$1.4 billion check that IBM would get to the \$102 million check that K-Mart would get. But the repeal of the Alternative Minimum Tax in total represents a give-back to corporations across the country of \$25 billion; \$25 billion in checks to the largest corporations in the country.

When you contrast that with not only prescription drugs and education and so many of the alternatives that the gentleman from Connecticut men-

tioned, but if you just looked at the Democratic proposal to deal with bioterrorism, the kinds of things that are here, not just acquiring and researching vaccines and antibiotics, that is pretty obvious. But, for example, improving the public health infrastructure. No one can question that that is not a very important priority today. Or improving border security and strengthening the Coast Guard. That is a no-brainer. It needs to be done. Protecting our water supply or addressing threats to mail delivery.

These are not frivolous things that maybe we ought to do in 3 or 4 years if and when we can find the money. These are things that need to be done now; need to be done now and should be done now. And the truth is, this entire bill comes to \$7.5 billion, less than one-third of the entire tax cut that would go to corporations under the repeal of the Alternative Minimum Tax.

□ 2215

These are the choices we face as a Congress, and we need to make the right choice; and so far, this House has not done that.

We are joined tonight by the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. ETHERIDGE), and we are pleased to have him here to speak on these issues. I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. ETHERIDGE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Maine for yielding to me. I could not help but think that as we talk about this issue tonight how we got here. Our colleagues need to remember how we got here. Because I think it is important to also put it into perspective. We got here because we face one of the greatest challenges I think that we have faced as a Nation as a result of the September 11 attack, probably the greatest challenge we have faced since World War II. It will forever be a day when it was remembered when evil visited the shores of America unlike any time in the history of this country, when we lost more people in one day than probably any time since the Civil War, and even before that event, our economy was sort of teetering on the brink of a recession, certainly a slowdown, and that attack probably did push us to the edge.

It really bothers me, and I want to reflect on that, that we are working so hard to collect to help support our troops overseas and work with the White House on these issues that our colleagues would take that opportunity and use that situation to turn in and fail to realize that this so-called stimulus package that they rammed through the House on a partisan vote, it is just the wrong way to go. It is the wrong way to go. It is really about, in the end, having spent a number of



years in business and as a legislator before I came here and the superintendent of schools, I am always reminded that in the end, it is always about people. It is about people.

In October, we saw the unemployment rate jump a half a point, to 5.4 percent, a 5-year high. It was the biggest monthly increase in over 20 years. Let me repeat that again. The biggest monthly increase in over 20 years. And what do we do? How do we respond to that? We do not respond to it by reaching out and helping those who are hurting so badly. We want to help those who are already doing okay. That is really not how we got to the best economy probably in our lifetime, and we are not going to get back there that same way.

We know that no sector of the economy has been immune to this; but as the gentleman said, we had an opportunity to pass a very good stimulus package that would help get the economy going, help to get people working and get our economy moving again; and that is the kind of thing we need to have, not massive cuts for the wealthiest corporations who really would be happy to get it, I assume, and they would love to have it and the stockholders would be glad to have it.

However, it is not going to help the kind of people I talked with today in Raleigh at a press conference. I talked to a lady who has been laid off who has two children who worked for Midway Airlines when they went bankrupt and shut down after September 11, and she is now unemployed and is now drawing unemployment. She said, I believe she told me she filled out something like 30-some applications in a bad economy, and she is still filling out applications. Another lady who has worked 33 years for the same company and she said, you know, you cannot imagine how bad it is to have to back up your truck to the place you worked for 33 years and they closed their doors, and all that you have worked for all your life is loaded into the back of a truck and you drive home. She said, my unemployment benefits run out January 1, and I do not know where I am going to work. She said, I am a proud person. I want to work. And I am still making applications, trying to get a job. That is what we ought to be about. We ought to be working together to get that done. That is how we stimulate the economy. Pass things that put people to work.

Mr. Speaker, I think the House Republican leadership was absolutely wrong when they rammed through their special interest tax break and called it a stimulus package. It was not a stimulus package, and they know it. The American people do not need assurance that these tax cuts will get our economy back on its feet. They need jobs. I talked to people today who want a job. They just want to work. That is

all they ask. They do not need pats on the back and rhetoric about the strength and spirit of the American worker. They need a job. That is all they want.

Mr. Speaker, praise does not pay the bills, and you cannot cash encouragement. We need a package that will produce real results for those affected by the economic downturn. That is all they ask. They are just asking for a helping hand, a bridge, from now until the economy gets going.

So how do we create those jobs? There are ways we can do it. The gentleman has laid out some of them tonight in a package of things we need to spend money for. They are appropriate. They are things we have in the pipeline. They are things we ought to be doing. The security of our airports. Construction projects that will help make America safer and productive. Sure, part of them are building roads that we are going to build any way, just speed them up. We could spend a little money building a few school buildings. Is it not amazing what that would do for America? It would improve education. It would say to our children that education really is the most important thing we want them to be about in their young lives, and it would put in place a lot of good-paying jobs in America.

Mr. Speaker, there are things that we could be doing, working together, instead of playing the same old games that lead to nowhere, to help those special interest projects that are not going to pass. They are not going to pass Congress this year. So why are we still here, almost at Thanksgiving, not doing the work of the American people? I think the leadership has a responsibility, and I have always said, get out of the way or let somebody else do it, and it is time we get the job done for the American people. I yield back to the gentleman.

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for those comments. There really are so many ways we could go at this problem. Aviation security is one area where we need action and we need action now. I mean, we are hung up in this ideological debate about whether the security screeners at airports should be Federal employees or not; and the leadership on the other side here does not want any more Federal employees, as if that were a bad thing in itself. We know, of course, that if the security screeners were Federal employees, they would be paid probably twice as much, they would have some benefits, and they would stay on the job longer than the average of 9 months, which is the average length of time that a security screener in this country now stays on the job.

Now, we have done a contrast here with the bioterrorism act that House Democrats have put together, but there are so many other ways to go at this problem.

Mr. Speaker, it is interesting that the Democratic Chair of the Committee on Budget in the other body and the ranking Republican in the other body and the Republican Chair of the Committee on the Budget in the House and the ranking Democrat on the Committee on the Budget in the House, those four leading budget experts came together and they said, we need a stimulus package that is focused on the near term, focused on the next year, and that any tax cuts that are enacted should be temporary. They should be confined to that year, because that is when we need the stimulus. But the repeal of the alternative minimum tax is forever, and it is not only forever going forward, it is 15 years going back. We are going to rebate \$25 billion in past taxes paid on a minimum base by some of the larger corporations in this country. It is a mistake.

I yield to the gentleman from North Carolina.

Mr. ETHERIDGE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding. The gentleman has really touched on a very important point, because as we look at where we are today, where we want to get to tomorrow and next year and the year after for our children and hopefully our grandchildren, it really is important to be preparing and be making decisions that will not negatively affect our opportunity as a Nation and for those in business. What we do not want to do is build into any kind of economic stimulus package inflation. There is a reason why the long-term rates have not come down. All of this is in that.

The gentleman touched on earlier the whole issue of health care, and I feel like I need to share that with my colleagues tonight, about the ladies I talked to today in Raleigh and the conference we had. They were talking about the need, and this economic stimulus package really ought to deal with these issues, people who have lost their jobs and lost their health care and have children and have families. This lady said today, she said, you know, as bad as it is losing a job and a paycheck, you cannot imagine how difficult it would be to wake up one morning and get a call from your employer and say, do not come to work today. You are no longer employed.

So that is a shock enough, but all of a sudden when you realize your health care is gone with it. Now, you can buy into COBRA, but she shared with us the numbers today, and I do not remember the exact numbers, so I will not share those with my colleagues tonight; but what it amounted to is that her weekly unemployment checks over the month for her and her two children would have almost taken up every cent she got in unemployment to cover the cost for health care, with no money left to eat with and pay bills, et cetera.

Any package we get ought to have opportunity for people to get from here

to there and cover some benefits, pay down the cost so that they can be covered for them and their children. I mean, that is humane. Why would we not do that? Why would our colleagues not understand? When we send children to school and they leave in the morning, if an accident happens, they have no insurance, what are we doing to families? How can we say we are for families when we do not want to help children? That is what a stimulus package ought to be about. I do not understand it. I am sure the American people do not understand it either. We ought to take care of that.

I yield back to the gentleman.

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman's comments, because focusing on health care is very important. I mean, there is not a worker laid off in the country today who does not understand that when we qualify under COBRA, we wind up paying for the whole cost yourself; and when you have been laid off, the chances are good that you are not going to have the money to buy the health insurance you need. It is a tremendously serious problem.

I yield again to the gentleman from Connecticut.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Maine, and I thank the gentleman from North Carolina for his insight. I think it is always instructive when we hear what is going on back in people's districts, as the gentleman's discussion with the woman in Raleigh revealed today.

I want to go back to something I said at the outset. My wife often asks me, she says, geez, you know, when you are speaking before the body, it is an empty Chamber. Is this the way Congress works? The hard truth, and we talk about legislation being rammed through, it is oftentimes missed by the public. There was about an hour's worth of debate, 30 minutes on each side, on an issue that is extraordinarily important to people. This past Veterans' Day, when we go home and face what Tom Brokaw aptly called the greatest generation ever, how do we look them in the eye and tell them what is going on? Here is a generation that is four square behind this effort to root out terrorism. All they want is to make sure that the land that they fought for, the freedoms that they fought for persevere and their children and grandchildren are safe and secure from terror.

□ 2230

That is the wish of every American. So they selflessly say, look, we will make more sacrifices, whatever it takes to make sure that we have a country free of terrorist attack, free of the horrific calamity that befell this Nation on September 11.

We have to get voices beyond this Chamber, like Mr. Brokaw and others,

who recognize that the time for platitudes and promises and lip service is over; that we have chronicled this generation in books, in song, and in movies. Yet, when it comes to sustaining them and allowing them to live out their final days in dignity, what we give them is alternative minimum tax reductions for the wealthiest corporations; and tell them not to worry, though, we will mention them in the next speech at Veteran's Day or Memorial Day, or when we pause again to pay respects to the greatest generation ever, when what we should be doing is providing them with prescription drug relief and making sure that we have a stimulus package that, as the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. ETHERIDGE) says, reaches out and impacts people.

I know American corporations believe this, as well. We have many fine corporations in this country. Why the headlong, wrongheaded proposal of a few on the other side leads this Nation, at a time when we are coming together in unity, on such a destructive path is puzzling.

But look in the eyes of a veteran and try to tell them that this is the course we have laid out for them.

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for those comments, Mr. Speaker. The point the gentleman is really making is that in this body we have choices. We have choices about what we are going to do. And the choice, when we look at the tax cuts, the corporate tax cuts in the Republican economic stimulus package, and compare them to some of the things that we have been talking about tonight, some of the profoundly important needs of the country, we can see that there is a choice, there is a difference.

Let us take just one. I put this one point up to deal with one of the lines in the two previous charts we were using. Here is a choice that is a real choice that is faced by all of us in this Chamber.

Now, under the Republican economic stimulus package there is an \$833 million handout to General Motors, a check for \$833 million for General Motors. Now, I know the auto industry is having some problems, but they are still selling a lot of cars, and \$833 million in my book makes no sense. But this has already passed.

By the same token, I talked to all sorts of constituents in Maine who are concerned about the food supply. We have come up with a proposal to make significant improvements in protecting agriculture and our food supply that would cost \$725 million, over \$100 million less than the check that would be given to General Motors under the Republican bill. That is a fundamental choice that we have.

Members can substitute something else if they would like, but the fact is

that our bill dealing with bioterrorism may never come up in the Chamber because the leadership on the other side will not allow it to come up. But they have an economic stimulus bill to come up that thinks, proposes, somehow believes that if we just write a check to General Motors for \$833 million, that that will help somebody besides those who own General Motors stock, even though there are no conditions, no requirement to keep jobs, no requirement to invest; nothing, just a handout for past taxes paid.

Those are the kinds of choices we face, and to date, this Congress is not making the right decisions.

I yield to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. ETHERIDGE).

Mr. ETHERIDGE. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend, the gentleman from Maine, because he is absolutely right.

On that point, there was another piece in the economic stimulus package that I think our colleagues need to remember. I remember what former Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin had to say about the stimulus package that passed, and what one of the alternatives we had in ours was that was so important, because in the previous package, they were left out. That was the low-income individuals who helped pay taxes but they did not get a rebate. In our package, that was in there as an alternative; I think it is appropriate.

These were people, Mr. Speaker, that were left out in the original Bush tax plan, in the first rebate. These folks would put that money right back in the economy. Secretary Rubin has said and others have said that that is really where we ought to be putting it.

Those folks would put it in the economy immediately, buying things and spending it on such "luxury items" as food, clothing, medicine, heat and shelter; things that help get the economy going. If we say it turns over six or seven times, that is really what we need.

I got a telephone call this weekend, and will not share the lady's name. She is a very proud lady. She would not want her name shared. She has worked all of her life. She is probably in her early 80s now, or late 70s, I would say, or mid-70s, to be a little more accurate. But she was calling about prescription medicine, the issue the gentleman raised earlier.

She said, "You know, I would not want people to know, but I do not have the money to meet my medical bills each month and pay for my food and lodging. I just do not get enough money. When is Congress going to fulfill the promise that every politician made in the last election, Democrat and Republican? I remember the ads," she said.

I agree with her. I remember the ads, too. I am not sure our colleagues on the other side remember those ads and those commitments they made. We



now have a chance to do that in some way as part of this package. Promises made ought to be promises kept.

I do not remember all these numbers the gentleman has shared that they had in their tax bill in TV ads during the last election. We may see them in the next election.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman will continue to yield, to further that point, if we were to be a nation concerned about shared sacrifice, what we would truly do at this point, at this critical point in our history, during a time of war, is freeze all the tax cuts until we have done the kind of assessment in this Nation that will provide our people with what they need.

As we have said over and over again, it is a time of shared sacrifice, but the American public does not see that. What they see is a Congress that is mired in providing a so-called stimulus package.

I cannot recall any war in this Nation's history where the first order of business and the top priority was to provide the Nation's leading corporations and wealthiest few with a tax cut, that is what is obscene, while at the same time prevailing upon the Nation to come together, to be more vigilant, to be more patriotic, to become involved, to not look the other way, to not be deferential.

Yet, what they see coming out of Congress is more pork for the few, while we ask the deserving many to go without, and they have gone without for too long. Those promises were made and those promises were made before September 11, but September 11 can serve as December 7 of 1941 did: as a rallying point for this Nation to come together in shared sacrifice for the common good of all Americans. That can only happen, that can only happen, if we invest in people and not the elite few.

Mr. ALLEN. The gentleman is so correct, Mr. Speaker. IBM is going to get \$1.4 billion in a check from the Federal Government, and IBM is not sacrificing anything in the course of this great national effort to deal with terrorism both abroad and at home.

But one of my concerns, among others, is the long-term effect of these permanent give-backs on the economy as a whole, because these are not targeted. These are not 1-year tax cuts to stimulate investment.

I think we can make a case for that. We can make a case for a targeted tax cut to stimulate investment in the next year and in the next year only. But these are permanent, Mr. Speaker. These tax cuts that are being proposed not only are going to some of the largest corporations in the country, instead of going to, for example, acquiring vaccines and antibiotics, but they are not going to stimulate the economy.

Alan Greenspan pointed out that the last tax cut, the personal tax cut, the one passed in July, that tax cut, he concluded, of every dollar of that tax cut, approximately 20 cents was actually spent. The rest was either saved or it went to pay down credit card debt or something else.

If we provide a tax cut to those people who are really struggling, who have lost their jobs, who did not even earn enough money to get a \$300 tax cut the last time, they have no choice, because they live from paycheck to paycheck. They will spend that money because that is the way it is, and that will help stimulate economic growth in this country.

Moreover, these permanent, long-term tax cuts for the wealthiest individuals and the largest corporations in the country will have the effect of draining the Federal Treasury, which means that we will not be paying down the national debt anything like we were talking about just before this summer. That will not happen.

As a result, the Federal Government will be taking money or will be borrowing money in the future that otherwise could go into the private sector, but we have lost our fiscal discipline. We have lost the ability in this Chamber now to say that we are going to constrain ourselves, we are not going to go overboard in spending, and we are not going to go overboard in tax cuts.

The hard truth is, we have gone so far overboard on tax cuts for the wealthiest individuals and the largest corporations that we are endangering our long-term economic security. We are acting in such a way that we will drive up interest rates for home mortgages, that will drive up interest rates for business loans, because the Federal Government will have to borrow more and more simply to stay afloat.

It is bad economic policy, and it will do great harm to the kinds of people that we are concerned about who are simply trying to get by, to pay the bills, to keep a job, and to keep their families together.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. If the gentleman will continue to yield, to add insult to injury, I might just say, adding insult to injury in the proposal in the so-called stimulus package under subsection S of the IRS Code provides and in fact encourages these same corporations to make investments overseas while we are laying people off in the United States of America.

It encourages overseas investments because those overseas investments would not be subject to our taxes here in this country. At the same time, we are laying people off here in our own country.

This is wrongheaded public policy, and it needs to be changed.

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. ETHERIDGE).

Mr. ETHERIDGE. Very briefly, and I thank the gentleman for this special order this evening, I think he is absolutely correct. As I look at the gentleman's chart and think of the choices, if we look at the vaccines and antibiotics we know we are going to need to face the challenges we face on bioterrorism, this is not a long-term commitment, this is a one-time thing. When we acquire it and get to that point, we will have it.

We need to remember, too, that in addition to the commitments of those folks at home for jobs and opportunity, bridging the gap for the problems we face now, we also have that commitment to our seniors, that greatest generation the gentleman talked about, that paid in their Social Security dollars, and some others are paying in, that we were going to maintain that promise and commitment to them.

There is not an endless supply of resources. This money will come out of those dollars. If we make it permanent, we will permanently impede our ability to meet the commitment to that greatest generation and others when they reach retirement age. That is bad public policy, it is wrong, and we have absolutely violated our commitment to them and to the commitments we made, as I said, last year and the year before that that we were not going to get into that money.

We are in a crisis now, and people know we have to deal with immediate things. But these kinds of public policies are not in the best interests of this country, they are not in the best interests of our people, and they certainly are not in the best interests of the future, when we want to have economic activity at the levels we have seen before for our children and our grandchildren.

I thank the gentleman because I think he is absolutely right. We can make good public policy. We can have a stimulus package that truly helps those who have a need and gets us back on the track to employment opportunities for the people who really need them.

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Mr. ALLEN. The gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. ETHERIDGE) makes an important point and it is worth elaborating on.

If we write a check to IBM for \$1.4 billion, that money comes out of the Federal Treasury. That is where it comes from. It is not available, for example, to acquire vaccines and antibiotics and we are going to have to do this. The President has said we have to do this. It is clear we have to do this. How much we have to do is the subject of debate, but we know we have to have more vaccines and antibiotics developed and acquired and stored and available.

Now, if this \$1.4 billion that is just simply given back to IBM is not available, the money for acquiring vaccines

and antibiotics will be coming out of the general revenues of the Federal Government, but we are already well into the Social Security surplus. So what does that mean? That means that this \$1.4 billion is coming out of the Social Security surplus.

Who pays into the Social Security fund and how much do they pay? Well, 7.5 percent from the employees, 7.5 percent from the employer up to about \$80,000. And there we have to it, and that is where that money is coming from. Essentially, it is all coming, it is all coming from salaries of \$80,000 and below.

Now, there will be some people who earn more than \$80,000 but they are only paying their Social Security taxes on that first \$80,000 or 82- or 83-, whatever the limit is now. So what we are doing is, we are getting to a place where we are funding with general revenues of the United States. We are actually starting to have a flat tax that hits the people at the lower end of the income scale much harder than the people at the upper end of the income scale, who are better able to afford it.

We developed a progressive tax system in this country because we believed it was fair. And now as we slide back into deficits and as we do these handouts for the largest corporations in the country, the effect is to lean even harder on the ordinary people of this country, who are just getting up every day, trying to keep their jobs, support their families, somehow pay for their health care; and these are the people who we are asking to sacrifice, even as we write a check to IBM, according to the Republican House proposal, for \$1.4 billion.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. LARSON).

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, let me compliment again the gentleman from Maine (Mr. ALLEN) for the fine job he has done. I think many Americans can recall the great voice from outside this chamber, when writing about the Harvest of Shame, was Edward R. Murrow. And he talked eloquently and was able to visually bring home to so many Americans problems associated with poverty, of just a small element of society. And yet it was very powerful and resounding. It is my belief that we are going to need the same kind of voices beyond this Chamber as well to demonstrate to the American public in a resounding manner, a public that is tired of promises and platitudes, and not fulfilling the commitment to the people that we are sworn to serve here in this Chamber.

I believe that it is going to take voices beyond this Chamber to bring these issues home. But I commend the very strong voice, the gentleman from Maine (Mr. ALLEN) who has so tirelessly and eloquently stated the plight of the elderly with regard to prescription drugs, and this evening has laid

out in very specific fashion, albeit a very narrow tax in terms of the repeal of the alternative minimum tax. But just that tax alone, when contrasted to what could be provided to the American public, it has got to make people very disturbed and upset when they see the tax cut juxtaposed against what could be homeland security relief for so many of our front line responders in municipalities and cities all across this Nation. I commend the gentleman again.

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman. I appreciate his being with me tonight during this special order.

In 1854 Abraham Lincoln wrote, "The role of governments is to do those things that a community of individuals cannot do or cannot do so well alone."

What he was talking about is, our governments are there to do things that we, of necessity, do together. And so many of the things that relate to homeland security are just that. We cannot have an individual Coast Guard. We cannot protect our borders individual by individual. We cannot deal with the threat of terrorism. We cannot provide vaccines. We cannot deal with all of these threats to our existence, these national security threats, as individuals. We can only do it through our government, our governments really at all levels.

It is a tragedy that in the aftermath of September 11, when we think about the way people in this country have responded, this is, in my opinion, the greatest sense of common purpose, the most resolve, the greatest unity that we have had in my lifetime. And to squander that unity, that resolve, by returning to an old agenda of giving corporate tax breaks in the \$25 billion range for this one tax cut alone, at a time when the country as a whole needs attention, not just aviation security, not just threats of bioterrorism but trying to deal with health care and education needs in this country, it is a tragedy that we would be so divided this way.

It is my hope that there will be a reconsideration of this issue, and that in the other body and in whatever conference emerges, that we will find a new way to express our common purpose, our common goals, the things we have to do together to deal with the threats that we are faced with today.

If we do that, I think that the sense of unity, the kind of resolve, the determination that we have, the sense that we are all in this together as the people of New York feel, as the people of Maine feel, and the people of Connecticut, and the people all across this country, if we do that, then I think this sense of common purpose can be preserved for a long time to come.

But if we degenerate into the same old tax breaks for the wealthiest individuals and the largest corporations in

this country, if we degenerate into that, we will have lost an opportunity to pull ourselves together and lead this country over the next 10 years to a place we have not been before. That is our challenge. We have choices and we need to make better choices than we made 2 weeks ago.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for being with me.

#### ANTI-AMERICAN SENTIMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FORBES). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. TANCREDO) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. TANCREDO. Mr. Speaker, as we face the calamity and the calamitous events of September 11 and recognize what our Nation now needs to do in response to that, we also recognize that there are literally hundreds, thousands, perhaps, hundreds of thousands of incidents of incredible patriotism that have been expressed by the average American citizen. We have seen the many pictures on TV and the representations of the flag being held aloft, and it is truly inspiring. And it is indeed necessary for our country to survive, to have that kind of united agreement upon our principles about who we are and what we are trying to accomplish in this conflict.

But recently it has come to my attention, and I am sure to the attention of many of my colleagues, that we are also reaping what the seeds of political correctness that have been sown in this Nation over the last several years are producing for us.

For years we have, I should not say we perhaps, because it is predominantly liberal political thought that has initiated a hatred for everything American, for everything with expressions of what might be called patriotic. Textbooks all over our land for the last 20 years or more have been purged of anything resembling an appreciation of those who fought and died for our freedom.

We make fun of the people who constructed the most brilliant political document ever to be conceived of by the mind of men on this planet. And we taught our children to ignore or even deride these people and our heritage. We look down upon any act of patriotism. It was not perceived to be politically correct.

Our media, of course, aided and abetted this anti-American spirit under the guise of an intellectual superiority and political correctness. Our courts on far too many occasion have encouraged this anti-American sentiment by interpreting the Constitution in a way that would have had Madison and Adams spinning in their graves.

All of these things, in fact, comprise old news. No one is really surprised